pious king who justified the bonzes' prophecies by his deeds. He 643*
built a magnificent pagoda to the memory of his father, the
Wat-Visoun (2), the materials for which were requisitioned from 346
175*

2. The edifice which bears this name dates from the time of the king Zakarine (1898). The enormous "stupa" next to it, which covered rich treasures which have only recently come to light, is now in the process of being restored.

the vassals of the northern provinces. Legend has it that the raft carrying the columns provided by the king of Tran-Ninh sank /539/
downstream from Pak-Vet, and the inhabitants of the region still say today that they can be seen at certain times of the year beneath the waters of the Nam-Khane.

Edict against the cult of the "Phis." The king's great piety 771
and his mystical attachment to the /73/ dogmas of orthodix 175*
Buddhism made him intolerant of the Brahmanic practices which 643*
continued to be honored by the peoples of his States. In 1527 he prohibited the cult of the Genii and decreed that all the temples erected to the "Phis" should be demolished. A pagoda called "Sisouvannathevalok" (1) was built on the very site of the sanctuary/778/

1. This pagoda was destroyed by a tornado in 1883. The king at that time, His Majesty Sisavang-Vong, had it rebuilt in 1905 on the original foundations.

of the tutelary Genie of the capital. But it was impossible, even for the supreme chief of existences, to drive from the heads of people as fatalistic as his subjects were the innumerable superstitions which they attached to accidents, to diseases and to the phenomena of sky, earth and water. Despite the royal ordinances the cult of the "Phis," together with a belief in sorcerers and witches, persisted and still persists today.

Phothisarath was the first of the kings of Lan-Xang to leave his 663
Xieng-Thong palace and reside at Vientiane for many years. 175*

Thanks to its central location and its comparative nearness to 633
the kingdoms of Ayuthya and Annam, this city had grown extensively as a consequence of the development of trade. The Kmers, who had been in full decline /74/ since the ruin of Angkor by the kings of Ayuthya, no longer had any influence there. The

663 Thais of the Menam, on the other hand, who were rid of the Cam-
175* bodians in the south but were pressed by the Burmese in the north, were
633 coming there in increasing numbers in search of gum lac and benzoin,
/439/which they took back with them and sold to the Dutch navigators who had been sailing the waters of the Indian Ocean ever since the sixteenth century.

643* War against Ayuthya (1536). Phothisarath had just settled in
721 Vientiane when he received a visit from Ekaracha, the prince of
175* Ayuthya, who had been driven out and was being pursued by his relative the Phaya-Attit. He welcomed the fugitive and refused to give him up, and war was the result. The king of Ayuthya was halted at Muong-Khuk (1) by the Lan-Xang troops before he could even cross

1. On the right bank, a little way downstream from Vientiane.

the river and had to beat a retreat. He died when he reached home from a wound received in the course of the battle.

643* Relations with Annam. Phothisarath confirmed his peaceful in-
648* tentions with respect to the king of Annam. Relations between the
175* two peoples had become more frequent since their violent /75/ contact in 1479, and quite a few Annamites had remained in Lan-Xang after the retreat of Lê-Thanh-Tôn's troops. The two sovereigns exchanged presents and established neighborly relations between their States which were marked by a cordiality heretofore unknown, even before Lê-Loi and Lane-Kham-Dèng. This was true to such a degree that Lan-Xang became the refuge of the partisans of the Lê while the Mac usurpers held sway. One of these partisans, Nguyên-Câm, who was the ancestor of the present royal family, came to seek asylum there around 1530.

Succession of Xieng-Mai. In 1546 the throne of Lan-Na (Xieng-Mai) became vacant, and Phothisarath claimed the succession rights which he held through his mother, a princess of that kingdom. To establish his claim he sent the governor Sene-Si-Mun-Muong with a sizeable armed force which dispersed the local pretenders and rapidly overcame any hesitation on the part of the latters' partisans. The chief of the bonzes came in person to offer the crown of Lan-Na to the king of Lan-Xang, and the king accepted it in behalf of his eldest son,